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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AF](#) [TU](#)

SUBJECT: TURKEY: DOSTUM UNWELCOME IN TURKEY, STAND-OFF
CONTINUES

REF: A. KABUL 303

[1](#)B. ANKARA 217

[1](#)C. KABUL 399

Classified By: Political Counselor Janice G. Weiner, reasons 1.4 b, d

[1](#)1. (C) The Dostum stand-off continues, MFA South Asia DDG Babur Hizlan told us February 26. Hizlan had phoned us on February 25 to relate that Dostum wants security guarantees to leave Kabul and go to the north, and the ten days on the Chief Prosecutor's order to Dostum to turn himself in or leave are nearly up. Hizlan described the situation as tense. Police surround his house in Kabul, but visitors can come and go. Turkish Ambassador to Afghanistan Tokdemir met with Dostum February 25 and found him reasonable, coherent, sober (apparently for several days), and interested in a peaceful solution.

[1](#)2. (C) About one hundred Dostum supporters are with him in Kabul, some armed, Hizlan continued. This group includes a number of tribal elders from the north who have reportedly tried to mediate between Dostum and his nemesis, Akbar Bay. They have supposedly proposed that Bay rescind his legal complaints against Dostum in exchange for suspending the legal investigation against Bay for allegedly plotting to murder Dostum. There has been talk of a jirga. According to what the Turks are hearing, Bay's supporters, including some powerful backers, would probably reject any such deal.

[1](#)3. (C) The Turks now believe Dostum was set up. By releasing Akbar Bay, Dostum's opponents provoked him and he fell into the trap, creating a pretext for Karzai to drive him from Afghanistan. Opposition to Dostum within government circles can be understood in an ethnic political context, according to Hizlan. While Dostum has never directly antagonized Pashtuns, he is an important figure within the opposition National Front, and elections are next year. Hizlan said the Turks understand the Afghan Chief Prosecutor, Minister of Interior, and President Karzai's National Security Advisor are driving the effort against Dostum. The GOT is annoyed by these recent developments because it believed President Karzai and FM Babacan had reached a deal in Doha, February 16, to allow Dostum to quietly return to the north.

[1](#)4. (C) Unlike previous discussions where the Turks were cagey on whether they would take Dostum, Hizlan was explicit: Turkey does not want Dostum to come here. Turkey knows from experience that Dostum would wield more influence over Afghan politics and Turkish-Afghan relations from Ankara than he

would from inside Afghanistan. His meddling -- which the GOT would not be able to stop -- would inevitably lead to a deterioration in Turkey's relations with the Afghan central government.

15. (C) The Turks know Dostum's health is not good. If he returns to the north, Hizlan said, the GOT has discussed sending a medical team from Turkey to Sheberghan to evaluate and treat him.

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